

History of the Auctus Club

1850-1950 Centennial History

By Helen Christensen

The Auctus club was organized as the Junion Athenian Club, sponsored by the Athenians on September 29, 1939. It had a well formed constitution and by-laws and a cultural purpose. The first officers were : Norine Fox, president; Arleen Goodwin, vice president and Merl Knudsen, secretary. The twenty charter members were: Norine Fox, Arleen Goodwin, Merl Knudsen, Helen Christensen, Thelma Goodwin, Lucile Rhodes, Lileth Peck, Josephine Robinson, Alta Webb, Ada Whipple, Isabel B. Brown, Lexie Bateman, Thelda Brown, LaPriel Goodwin, Reva Goates, Dorothy Southwick, Winnell Sorenson, Ethel Webb, Violet Washburn, and Alta Van Wagoner.

In the early spring of 1940, the club was federated and in the fall of the same year the present name was adopted. Auctus is a Spanish root word meaning- “promoter, narrator, originator, to enrich, to refine, to give prestige.”

During the year 1941 a book shelf was started at the Public Library. Each member was to purchase the book she reviewed and then present it to the library. The project was continued until 1945, by which time a total of forty three very worth-while books were presented to the library.

In 1942, the Auctus Club sponsored another literary club-the Liahonians.

During the war years ‘42 to ‘43 the regular club work was continued with the members primarily interested in cultural pursuits. Book reviews, operas and plays were reviewed; club pilgrimages were made to see good plays produced at the near by universities; talks and illustrated lectures were given on art, music, and kindred subjects. In addition, much time, effort and money was spent by the club collectively and individually on the war effort. The club assisted and directed war fund drives of various kinds, bond drives, Red Cross drives, Cancer fund and

Polio fund drives, Russian and Chinese relief drives. The members bought war bonds individually and received an award in 1942 for having 90 per cent of its members buying them regularly. They spent many hours in Red Cross work, including sewing and knitting. Generous contributions were made of both time and money to local institutions as well including the local hospital.

In 1945, the Women's Federated Club of Lehi set as their objects: To beautify the entrance to the cemetery with shrubs, grass and flowers. Later this was expanded to include beautification of the entire cemetery. In 1946, the Auctus and Liahonian clubs sponsored a Brigham Young University play to raise funds to assist with the project. In 1947 and 1948 the Federated Clubs set as their goal the raising of \$1000.00 to further this project. The Auctus Club also wrote letters and the Liahonian and Olympian clubs contacted the townspeople. A very successful dance was held and the financial goal was reached. By May of 1948 a total of \$1,112.75 had been accumulated in the cemetery beautification fund. With part of these funds, grass and shrubs were planted at the entrance to the cemetery and the driveway landscaped. In the fall of 1949 the Auctus Club planted tulip bulbs to further the project. During that same summer they assisted in serving a noon meal to the volunteer workers who were installing the new sprinkling system in the cemetery as part of the beautification project.

In the spring of 1947, the club held a very unique and pleasing fashion show which was very well planned and executed much to the delight of the audience. There were fashion groups for each ten-year period for the past 100 years from 1847 to 1947. Each club member took part in the show and modeled various types of clothes for each period. Displays of pioneer relics belonging to club members or treasured in their families were exhibited. Original sunbonnet favors carrying out the Centennial theme were presented to all those attending.

In 1947-48 the club joined the Women Legislature Council by paying for three delegates membership to the council. These members attended the Legislative council meeting and brought their reports back to the club to keep them well informed on legislative problems of current interest in the state. This practice has

been followed each year since that time.

In 1948-49, the club members worked on a drive for band uniforms for the High School Band and sold tickets for entertainments to raise money for this project. Post-war work has been continued to contributing to the Veterans hospital and the state Industrial School.

In the spring of 1948, because of a desire on the part of the Auctus Club to make an annual contribution in some form to the welfare of the community, a fashion show was held in which the girls from the Junior and Senior High Schools were invited to model and display articles made by them during their school year. Awards were given for the best pieces of workmanship done by the girls. A walnut sewing cabinet, a silver thimble, pinking shears, and scissors have been some of the awards. This project was adopted with the thought that it would prove to be a challenge to the interest and ability of the girls and thus stimulate more interest in the Home Economics departments of the schools. The success of this first year confirmed the hopes of the planners of this project and it has been continued each year since with changes and modifications which will make it better serve the purpose for which it was instituted.

The lives of all the Auctus Club members have been enriched because of the activities they have participated in, the service they have given, the friends and associates they have made, and the cultural subjects they have pursued.

Present Club officers (1950) are: Naomi Shaw, president; Ada Whipple vice president; and Helen Jones, secretary.